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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0220
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 7361
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE 1570
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 2995
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI IMMEDIATE 0004
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 2322
RUEHMK/AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE 0208
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT IMMEDIATE 0005
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 6390
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA IMMEDIATE 0153
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA IMMEDIATE 2006
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA IMMEDIATE 4352
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE IMMEDIATE 5794
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO IMMEDIATE 2565
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUENAAA/CNO WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA IMMEDIATE
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI IMMEDIATE
RHOVVKG/COMSEVENTHFLT IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUENAAA/SECNAV WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHKO/USDAO TOKYO JA IMMEDIATE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/USFJ IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000155

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR PM/ISO FOR FREDERICK
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PGOV, JA
SUBJECT: JAPAN PREPARING FOR MARCH MSDF DISPATCH TO HORN OF AFRICA

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor W. Michael Meserve; Reasons
: 1.4 (b/d)

1. (C) Summary: The Japanese government is preparing to dispatch Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) vessels to the Horn of Africa and is aiming to have the ships on station by the time Prime Minister Taro Aso has his first meeting with the President, according to MOFA Foreign Policy Bureau Deputy Director General Masafumi Ishii. The ruling coalition anti-piracy project team on January 22 endorsed the dispatch of MSDF vessels to the Indian Ocean under existing legislative authority. The two parties also agreed to press for early enactment of a permanent Anti-Piracy Law, currently being drafted by the Cabinet Office. The government and ruling parties are studying a possible dispatch of P-3C patrol aircraft after passage of the new legislation. End Summary.

2. (C) The January 22 endorsement by the ruling coalition of an early dispatch of MSDF vessels to the Horn of Africa to conduct anti-piracy operations has set in motion concrete planning for Japanese operations in the region. MOFA Foreign Policy Bureau DDG Ishii told the CDA that the Prime Minister wants Japanese ships in the region by the time he has his first meeting with the new President, likely in March. In

order to achieve this goal, he has instructed his government to begin detailed preparations.

Ships First

13. (C) Maritime Staff Office (MSO) Director of Plans and Policy (N5) RADM Tomohisa Takei told the Embassy that he expects the Defense Minister to issue a preparatory order within the next two weeks that would enable the Japan Coast Guard and MSDF to begin planning and exercises. He estimated that it would take six weeks to prepare for the dispatch. RADM Takei said that the initial dispatch would likely be of one or more surface combatants with JCG boarding teams assigned to conduct inspections. Takei said many details, including whether to deploy the MSDF's Special Boat Unit operators to support the JCG teams, will need to be worked out in the coming weeks.

Laws and Planes Later

14. (C) Ministry of Defense (MOD) Operations Division Director Masayoshi Tatsumi told the Embassy that Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada only acquiesced to the early dispatch after receiving assurances from the Prime Minister and ruling

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parties that they would prioritize enactment of a permanent Anti-Piracy Law, currently being drafted by the Cabinet Office. Tatsumi added that the Minister and senior MOD officials remain concerned that current laws are insufficient to formulate effective rules of engagement for the MSDF and JCG.

15. (C) MOFA Maritime Security Division Director Michio Harada said that draft anti-piracy legislation would likely be approved by the Cabinet in March for submission later in current session. MOFA and ruling coalition officials say they plan to press for the dispatch of P-3Cs to the region following enactment of the law. Harada complained, however, that MOD continues to drag its feet on dispatching a survey team to the region to look at potential bed-down sites for Japanese aircraft.

Comment

16. (C) Defense Minister Hamada appears to have finally given into political pressure to implement the Prime Minister's instructions to dispatch Japanese vessels to the Horn of Africa. It seems likely that MSDF vessels will be on station by mid-March. How broad their rules of engagement will be, and to what extent they will be authorized to coordinate actions with other anti-piracy coalition members, is still to be determined. The dispatch of P-3Cs is also far from assured given the possibility of a Diet dissolution before passage of the Anti-Piracy Law and continued resistance from the MOD leadership.

ZUMWALT